(c) whether the Government have issued tenders for procurement of wagons by passing the public sector Wagon India Limited;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(e) whether the Government have received any information regarding huge scam in purchase of wagons;

(f) if so, the details thereof;

(g) whether the Government have conducted any inquiry in this regard;

(h) if so, the outcome thereof and the action taken thereon ;and

(i) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) and (b) The policy of this Government is to bring transparency, economy and competition in its purchases. Within the parameters of this policy an administrative decision has been taken by the Ministry of Railways to procure 100% of its wagon requirement from Industry, through open tender from 1998-99.

(c) and (d) With a view to bring transparency, economy and competition in procurement of wagons, Railways have issued open tender for an estimated requirements of 27000 numbers in four wheeler units for 1998-99. This has been opened on 3.9.97. Members of Wagons India Limited were free to participate in the tender and all its twelve numbers have infact participated. The tender is still under finalisation and no contracts have yet been placed.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) to (i) Does not arise.

[English]

Surveillance Radars

*38. SHRI G.A. CHARAN REDDY : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Civil Aviation Ministry has decided to enhace air safety by bringing the entire space of the country under the cover of secondary surveillance radars and satellite based systems by the end of the current years;

(b) if so, whether the Airport Authority of India has been asked to speed up work on secondary surveillance radar installation projects ; and

(c) if so, the details of the measures taken or proposed to be taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATRAJAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Airport Surveillance Radars are already in operation at 7 airports and one is being installed at Ahmedabad in 1997. Three Secondary Surveillance Radars Systems are already installed and work of installing 8 more Systems is in progress . Air route Surveillance Radars are in operation at two locations and two are being installed. Automatic Dependent Surveillance Radars (ADS) will be installed in two location by December 1997.

Rail Accidents

*39. SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the government have held the General Managers responsible for any lapses of resulting in rail accidents;

(b) if so, whether the factors responsible for railway accidents have been investigated in depth;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the transfer of General Managers from one place to another is going to solve the problem; and

(e) if not, the other steps, the Government propose to take in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) to (d) Each accident on Indian Railways in investigated thoroughly either by the Railway authorities or by the Commissioner of Railway Safety which is administratively independent of Ministry of Railways. On the basis of such enquiries, responsibility is fixed in each case. Factors responsible for Railway accidents include *inter alia* the following :

(i) Human error, (ii) Track defect, (iiii) Carriage and Wagon defects, (iv) Equipment failures, (v) Fire in trains, (vi) Negligence on the part of the road users, (vii) Sabotage and other incidental factors. General Manager of Zonal Railway has not been held responsible individually in any accident enquiry report.

(e) Some of the measures taken to improve safety and prevent accidents are as under :

(i) The work of track circuiting has been accelerated on the trunk routes and other important main lines.

(ii) Modification of the Signalling circuitry is being carried out to minimise chances of human error in causing accidents.

(iii) Auxiliary Warning System for giving advance warning about 'Signal at danger' to the driver of the running train has been commissioned on Bombay suburban sections.

(iv) There has been progressive increase in use of Tie Tamping and ballast cleaning machines for track maintenance.

(v) For monitoring track geometry and running characteristics of the track, sophisticated track recording cars, oscillograph cars and protable accelerometers are being progressively used.

(vi) Maintenance facilities for coaches and wagons have been modernised and upgraded at many depots.

(vii) To prevent cases of cold breakage of axles, ROH Depots have been equipped with ultrasonic testing equipment for detection of flaws in the axles.

(viii) Whistle boards/speed breakers and road signs have been provided at unmanned level crossings and visibility for drivers has been improved.

(ix) Audio-visual publicity campaigns to educate road users on how to make a safe crossing are conducted.

(x) Steps have been taken to prevent inflammable and explosive materials from being carried in passenger trains.

(xi) Training facilities for drivers, guards and staff connected with train operation have been modernised including use of Simulators for training of drivers.

(xii) Refresher courses are regularly organised at specified intervals.

(xiii) Performance of the staff connected with train operation is being constantly monitored and those found deficient are sent for crash training.

(xiv) Periodical safety drives are conducted to inculcate safety consciousness among the staff.

Decline in Domestic Passengers

*40. SHRIMATI LAKSHMI PANABAKA:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been a sharp decline in the domestic passenger traffic in 1996-97 as targeted;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps being taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATRAJAN) : (a) There has been a marginal decline of 1.52% in domestic passenger traffic in 1996-97 as compared to 1995-96.

(b) The decline in the traffic was mainly due to closure of some of the private airlines.

(c) The airline operators are being permitted to acquire additional aircraft so that more passenger seats are available for the travelling public. For example, Indian Airlines Available Seats Kilometers (ASKMS) have increased from 9973 million in 1995-96 to 11216.4 million in 1996-97. Jet Airways has also added four B-737 aricraft in 1996-97.

Development of Solar Energy

219. SHRI ANANTH KUMAR : Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state the amount of Central grants sanctioned for the development of solar energy during 1997-98 in the country State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (CAPT. JAI NARAYAN PRASAD NISHAD) : A programme on solar photovoltaics and solar thermal applications is being implemented by the Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources during 1997-98. Under this programme specific devices i.e. solar lanterns, home lighting systems, village power plants, street lights and some other PV systems and solar cookers are covered under a subsidy scheme of the Government. Grants are released to the States for these programmes on the basis of physical targets and after scrutiny of the claims following implementation. The grants released so far to the State during 1997-98 are given in enclosed Statement. Claims of some more States are being processed.

Statement

Grants released during 1997-98 under Solar Energy Programme

Sl. No.	State/U.T.	Amount released (Rs.)
1	2	3
1.	Andhra Pradesh	990
2.	Assam	6,40,000
3.	Bihar	25,00,000